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BOOK NOTICES.

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.*

With the purpose of these volumes one cannot but be in hearty sympathy. They aim to give a continuous exposition of the two Books of Samuel. It is to be expected that the work to be found in them will be based on the widest knowledge and animated by a devout spirit. From the author's reputation as a scholar one has a right to look for this. Dr. Blaikie's contributions to biblical history have been singularly able and helpful. What of the workmanship here displayed? Much may be said in praise. There are serious faults, however, which greatly mar its otherwise commendable character. The author indulges too freely in imaginative flights on which he founds homiletic conclusions which are altogether too unsubstantial. To conjecture for example (cf. p. 127, vol. I.), that the asses of Kish which had strayed were specially needed, so that the operations of the farm had to be suspended in consequence; and then to urge upon all the blessedness of equanimity under similar circumstances—do not call this exposition; it might better be named *im*position. These volumes are, unfortunately, too full of this kind of thing. Exception might be taken, also, to the expositor's unfavorable conception of Elkanah as not justified by the facts; to his dark and unsympathetic delineation of Saul and the correspondingly too highly favorable portrayal of David. Yet no one can fail to be more or less profited by the perusal of these expositions or to be convinced that expository preaching if done on right methods is in the highest degree attractive and edifying.

AN OLD TESTAMENT INTRODUCTION.†

This book contains "a succinct outline of each of the books of the Old Testament, giving attention to authorship, date, contents, chief critical difficulties, and such literature as may aid in the solution of the difficulties." The author has succeeded in condensing his information into 148 pages ($7\frac{1}{2}$ in. × 5 in.) and in presenting us with the established facts in a very handy form. Where there is room for difference of opinion, he has refrained carefully from dogmatizing, and contents himself with giving the various theories. The book will render its best service when supplemented by *oral* instruction, but is nevertheless an excellent guide to students who wish independently to make their way through the literature of the topics suggested. The main facts concerning the twelve minor Prophets are given in two convenient tables at the end. The book supplies a need which has long been felt and in the attractive dress which the publisher has given it, will doubtless be very cordially welcomed by all interested in the study of the Old Testament.

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* I. THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL. By Rev. Prof. W. G. Blaikie, D. D., LL. D. The Expositor's Bible. New York: *A. C. Armstrong & Son.* II. THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL. By the same.

† INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. With Analyses and illustrative literature. By O. S. Stearns, D. D., Professor of Biblical Interpretation in Newton Theo. Inst. Boston: *Silver, Burdett and Co.* $1.00.